

THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

THE BIBLE.

Mr. Editor—I was, during the early part of my life, in the habit of reading the Bible, and placing as much confidence in it as any one. This you would be led to infer by my former communication. But, like many others, I read my Bible without thinking. I was told by my parents, and by the parson, that it was not only my duty to read, but to believe; and I did believe both the Bible and all that the minister said besides. Then, sir, as in the days of my ancestors, it was the practice with us, like so many hungry chickens, to pick up every crumb that fell from the pulpit; and even to forget the text was considered disgraceful. Meeting, too, was attended with such glorious exactness, that the pastor knew his flock, and the sheep, too, knew the pastor; for if any one was missing, the pastor made it a part of his holy vocation to know the reason why.

Under such a state of church discipline, it will not be thought surprising that I should have considered it unnecessary for me to think for myself on religious subjects: so that, instead of reading first, and then believing, I believed first, and then read; and in this way I actually read through the Bible in course, and knew but little more when I had finished than when I began it; that is, I knew nothing about the Jews as a separate nation—nothing of the extent, situation, or relative position of their country. Indeed, Mr. Editor, I thought that in reading the Bible I was reading about all the people of “olden times.” But after I had acquired some little knowledge in geography, which my good parents were not remarkably blessed with, I found some little difficulty in conceiving how so small a country as that of Judea should be capable of subsisting a population so numerous. Still I was a good believer, and never disputed with, or asked impertinent questions of, our saintly minister; and if I ever wandered from the old presbyterian platform, I was always glad to return and protect myself within the *sanctum sanctorum* of the Christian faith, as taught by parson Edwards; and here I might, perhaps, have been to this day, had it not been for the circumstance which I mentioned in my former letter.

Now, then, behold me a new creature; and, grown more venturous by the example of my husband, finally concluding that it would be just as well for me to think for myself, as to hire a minister by the year to think for me. Since the adoption of this opinion, I have found many, very many, things in the Bible, not only a *little* contradictory, but, to me, perfectly irreconcilable. I will at present only mention one: about two years ago, [I remember the time very well,] having taken down my Bi-

ble and dusted it—for I delight in a clean book—what a pity, said I to myself, that the inside of it is not a little more free from filth! My attention was caught by the second chapter of Matthew; but before I got to the end, it occurred to me that I had, in some of the other three books, seen a very different account of Christ's birth and infancy; and, after a little search, I found it in the second of Luke. In comparing them, however, I found them so materially different, that it was impossible for me to reconcile them.

Perhaps I ought to have stated to you before, that when I ceased to have full faith in the Bible, the reverend "doctors of divinity" never came to partake of my good young hyson and sweetmeats. Perhaps they think my tea not as good as it used to be when I was orthodox; or that I shall trouble them with my doubts. Be that as it may, when I now find any thing in the Bible which I cannot reconcile by the force of my own reasoning, I am almost of necessity obliged to take up with St. Paul's advice, "and ask my husband at home." I applied to him in this instance. He said, he had not noticed the differences I mentioned; but, with me, thought them quite irreconcilable. It has since occurred to me, that the editor of the *Antidote* would be a very proper person; and therefore I would apply to him through your paper to have the two passages explained. And if this editor will compose and reconcile this point, (and he certainly will not refuse the request of a female,) I will acknowledge the favor by further application in cases of equal difficulty to be found in the Bible, which are neither "few nor far between."

Athens, February 16, 1828.

OCTAVIA.

IMPORTANT EXAMINATION. BY LORD BOLINGBROKE.

Continued from page 72.

Of the Person of Jesus.—Jesus was born at a time when fanaticism was still dominant, but when decency began to show itself a little. The long commerce of the Jews with the Greeks and Romans had given to the respectable part of the nation manners less vulgar and irrational; but the populace, who are always incorrigible, preserved the same spirit of folly. Some Jews, who were oppressed under the kings of Syria, and under the Romans, had then imagined that God would send them a liberator, a messiah. This expectation ought naturally to be fulfilled in the person of Herod. He was their king, and an ally of the Romans; he had rebuilt their temple, the architecture of which greatly surpassed that of Solomon, since he had filled up a precipice on which that edifice was erected. The people no longer groaned under a foreign yoke; they paid no imposts but to their own monarch; the Jewish worship flourished, and the ancient laws were respected. Jerusalem, we must confess, was then in its greatest splendor.

Idleness and superstition brought forth many factions or religious societies; sadducees, pharisees, Essenians, Judaites, Therapeutæ, and Johnists, or disciples of John; in the same way as the papists have their Molinists, Jansenists, jacobins, and cordeliers. However, at that time no one spoke of the expectation of a messiah. Neither Josephus nor Philo, who have entered into such minute details of the Jewish history,

say that there was any expectation of the coming of a christ, an anointed, a liberator, a redeemer, of whom they had then less need than ever. And if there had been one, it must have been Herod. There was, in reality, a party or sect called Herodians, who acknowledged Herod to be the messenger of God.

At all times this people had given the names of Anointed, of Messiah, of Christ, to any one that had been serviceable to them. Sometimes it was given to their own pontiffs, and sometimes to foreign princes. The Jew who compiled the reveries of Isaiah makes him employ a vile flattery, very worthy of a Jewish slave: "Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden to subdue nations before him," &c. (Isaiah xlv. 1.) The 1st book of Kings (2 Kings ix. 6) calls the wicked Jehu, anointed. A prophet announces to Hazael, king of Damascus, that he is the messiah and anointed of the Most High. Ezekiel says to the king of Tyrus, "Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty—thou art the anointed cherub." (Ezekiel xxviii. 12, 14.) If this prince of Tyrus had known that these titles were given to him in Judea, it rested only with himself to have been a kind of demigod. He had an apparent right to such a title, supposing Ezekiel to have been inspired. The evangelists have not said so much for Jesus.

However, it is certain, that no Jew either hoped, desired, or announced an anointed, a messiah, in the the time of Herod the Great, under whom, it is said, Jesus was born. After the death of Herod, when Judea was governed as a Roman province, and another Herod was established, by the Romans, tetrarch of the little barbarous district of Galilee, many fanatics took upon themselves to preach among the ignorant, particularly in this Galilee, where the Jews were more ignorant than elsewhere. It is thus that Fox, a poor cobbler, established in our own times the sect of quakers, among the peasantry in one of our counties. The first that founded a Calvinist church in France was a woollen carder, named John Le Clerc. It is thus that Muncer, John of Leyden, and others, founded anabaptism among the poor people in some of the cantons of Germany.

I have seen the convulsionists in France institute a small sect, among the mob in one of the fauxbourgs of Paris. Sectarians began in this way all the world over. They are generally beggars who rail against the government, and finish either by becoming chiefs of a party, or by being hanged. Jesus was put to death at Jerusalem, without having been anointed: John the Baptist had already been condemned to death. Each of them left some followers among the dregs of the people. Those of John established themselves in Arabia, where they still exist. Those of Jesus were at first very obscure, but as soon as they began to be associated with some of the Greeks, they began to be known.

The Jews under Tiberius having carried their accustomed knaveries to a higher pitch than ever, and having likewise seduced and robbed Fulvia, wife of Saturninus, were driven from Rome, and could not be reestablished there, except by giving much money. They were likewise severely punished under Caligula and Claudius. Their disasters served in some measure to embolden the Galileans, who comprised the new sect, to separate themselves from the Jewish communion. At length, they found some who were a little acquainted with letters, who put themselves

at their head, and who wrote in their favor against the Jews. This was what produced such an immense number of gospels, a Greek word, signifying "good news." Each gave a life of Jesus; none of them agreed with the rest, but all had some resemblance by the number of incredible prodigies which, to vie with each other, they attribute to their founder.

The synagogue, on its part, seeing that a new sect had sprang up in its bosom, and that it was vending a life of Jesus very injurious to the sanhedrin, began to make inquiries respecting this man, to whom it had not hitherto paid any attention.

We have still a stupid work of that time, entitled "Sepher Toldos Jeschut." It appears to have been written many years after the death of Jesus, during the time when the gospels were compiled. This book, like all others of the Jews and Christians, is full of prodigies; but, extravagant as it is, we must confess that many statements contained in it are much more probable than those related in our gospels. It is said in the "Toldos Jeschut," that Jesus was the son of a woman named Mirja, who was married in Bethlehem to a poor man of the name of Jocanam. There was in the neighborhood a soldier of the name of Joseph Pander, a well shaped, good looking man, who fell in love with Mirja or Maria. As the Hebrews do not express their vowels, they frequently take *a* for *j*. Mirja became with child by Pander. Jocanam, who was seized with confusion and despondency, quitted Bethlehem, and went to secrete himself in Babylon, where there were still many Jews. The conduct of Mirja disgraced her, and her son Jesus, or Jeschut, was declared a bastard by the judges of the city. When he became old enough to be admitted into the public school, he placed himself among the legitimate children; however, he was compelled to leave this class. Hence arose the animosity against priests, which he manifested when he attained manhood. He lavished on them the most opprobrious epithets, calling them "a race of vipers and whitened sepulchres." Having, at length, quarrelled with Judas, a Jew, regarding a question of interest; as well as concerning some religious points, Judas denounced him to the sanhedrin. He was arrested, began to cry, and beg pardon; but in vain. He was flogged, stoned, and afterward put to death.

Such is the substance of this history. Insipid fables and impertinent miracles have since been added, which injured it much; but the book was known in the second century. Celsus quotes it; Origen refutes it, and the book has reached us quite disfigured.

The chief part of what I have just stated is certainly more probable, more natural, and more conformable to what passes in the world in our own days, than any of the fifty gospels of the Christians. It was much more likely that Joseph Pander was the father of Mirja's child, than that an angel came from heaven, with God's compliments to a carpenter's wife, in the same way as Jupiter sent Mercury to visit Alcmena. Every thing they tell us about Jesus is worthy of the Old Testament, and of Bedlam. They bring I know not what kind of *Agion pneuma*, a Holy Ghost, that had hitherto never been spoken of, and which they have since told us is the third part of God.

Jesus becomes the son of God, and of a Jewess: he is not yet God himself, but a superior being. He works miracles. The first he per-

forms is to have himself conveyed by the devil to the top of one of the mountains of Judea, where he could discover all the kingdoms of the earth. His raiment appeared white. What a miracle! He changes water into wine at a repast, where the guests were already drunk. (It is difficult to say which of those pretended prodigies is the most ridiculous. Many people give a preference to that of the wine at the marriage of Cana. That God should say to his mother, the Jewess, "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" is a strange thing; but that he should feast with drunkards, and should change six pitchers of water into wine for men that had already drank too much, is a blasphemy as execrable as it is impertinent. The Hebrew text uses a word which answers to "tipsy," or half drunk; the Vulgate says "inebriatè.") He dries a fig tree, because it does not furnish him with figs in the month of February. Yet the author of this tale has at least the honesty to tell us, that it was not the season for figs. He sups with women, and then with publicans; and yet it is pretended in his history that he looked upon publicans as bad characters. He goes into the temple; into the large inclosure where the priests resided, in the court where retail dealers were authorized by law to sell fowls, pigeons, and lambs to those who came to sacrifice. He takes a whip, and plays upon the shoulders of the dealers, whom he drives out, as well as their fowls, pigeons, sheep, and oxen, and strews their money on the ground. Yet he is suffered to proceed without interruption! And if we believe the book attributed to John, they content themselves with asking him to work a miracle, in order to show his authority to play pranks like these in a place so respected.

It was a very great miracle for thirty or forty tradesmen to suffer themselves to be kicked, and to lose their money, by one man, without saying anything to him. There is nothing in *Don Quixotte* which approaches such extravagance as this. But instead of performing the miracle they demand of him, he contents himself with saying, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." (John ii. 19.) The Jews reply, according to John, "Forty and six years was this temple building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?" It was asserting a great falsehood to say that Herod had been employed forty-six years in building the temple of Jerusalem. The Jews, in their reply, could not make use of such a falsehood. By the bye, this alone shows that the gospels have been written by men who were scarcely acquainted with any thing.

After this foolish enterprize, Jesus is said to have preached in the villages. What kind of discourses do they make him hold forth? He compares the kingdom of heaven to a grain of mustard seed; to a morsel of leaven, mixed in three measures of meal; to a net, that catches both good and bad fish; to a king, who kills his chickens to make a feast at his son's wedding, and sends his servants to invite the neighbors to it. The neighbors kill the servants that request them to dine, and the king kills the people who killed his servants, and burns their city. He then sends to compel the beggars on the highway to come and dine with him; and perceiving a poor guest who had no garment, instead of giving him one, he causes him to be thrown into a dungeon. This is the kingdom of heaven according to Matthew. In the other discourses, the kingdom of heaven is always compared to a usurer, who will absolutely have cent.

per cent. profit. They confess that archbishop Tillotson preaches in a different style.

How did the history of Jesus finish? By events which have happened in every country to people who wished to stir up the populace, without being sufficiently capable either of arming that population, or of gaining to themselves powerful protectors. They most commonly finish by being hanged. Jesus was put to death. He was executed publicly, but he rose from the grave privately. At length he ascended into heaven, in the presence of eighty of his disciples, without any other person in Judea seeing his ascension; which was, however, easy to be seen, and ought to have made a great noise in the world.

Our Creed, called by the papists *Credo*, which was attributed to the apostles, though evidently fabricated more than four hundred years after these apostles, acquaints us, that before Jesus ascended into heaven, he went on a tour to hell. Not a single word is said about this journey in the gospels, and yet it is one of the principal articles of the Christian faith. We cannot be Christians if we do not believe that Jesus descended into hell. Who was the first that imagined this journey? It was Athanasius, about three hundred and fifty years after the event. It is in his treatise against Appollinarus, on the incarnation of the Lord, where he mentions that the soul of Jesus descended into hell, while his body remained in the sepulchre. His words are worthy of attention, and show us with what sagacity and wisdom Athanasius reasoned: "It was necessary after his death that his divers essential parts should perform divers functions; that his body should remain in the sepulchre to destroy corruption, and that his soul should go into hell to vanquish death." The African St. Augustin, in a letter that he wrote to Evodus, seems to agree with him: *Quis ergo nisi infidelis negaverit fuisse apud inferos Christum?* Jerome, his cotemporary, was nearly of the same opinion; and it was during the time of Augustin and Jerome that this *Credo* was composed, which, among ignorant people, passed for the Apostles' Creed.

Thus were opinions, creeds, and sects established. But how could these detestable fooleries be credited? How did they overturn the other absurdities of the Greeks and Romans, and, at last, the empire itself? How have they caused so many evils, so many civil wars, lighted so many faggots, and spilled so much blood? We are going to account for it.

To be continued. 99

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 29, 1828.

Social System.—With feelings of real satisfaction we lay before our readers an extract of a letter, dated Feb. 1, from our correspondent at New Orleans, containing some highly gratifying particulars, which he learned from Mr. Owen, as to the progress of the Social System. We have, also, in the New Orleans papers, a file of which we have received to the 2d instant, several articles respecting Mr. O.'s proceedings during his stay in that city, among which there is a notice of his "*challenge*" (referred to by our correspondent) to the clergy, to have a private or public investigation of their religion; and declaring all the religions of the

world to be founded in the ignorance of mankind ; and that their systems are the sources of all the delusion, vice, and misery with which they are afflicted."

In answer to this *challenge*, the clergy, aware of the rottenness of their system, endeavored to evade a discussion by representing Mr. Owen as *insane*, and, therefore, unworthy of notice. In reply to this ridiculous and unavailing charge, the following letter appeared in the *Mercantile Advertiser* of the 31st January :

"MR. OWEN.

"I am one of those who wish to see fair play between all opponents, whether they wield the sword or the pen. I observed in your paper of yesterday morning an article purporting to be from the clergy of this city, although it is not signed by them officially. I examined it with attention, because I had previously listened to all the lectures which Mr. Owen had delivered. Although Mr. Owen animadverts with severe language on the errors of every class in society, he was never personal in a single instance ; he appears to act faithfully on the principles which he advocates. His writings, his speaking, his tone of voice, and his whole manner, indicate most strongly how deeply he feels a sincere charity for all his brethren of mankind, without being in any degree influenced by prejudice of religion or country. If there ever was a truly charitable and benevolent being in existence, I pronounce this man to be so. Now as to his alleged *madness*, which however I think could not have been made by the clergy, if they had attended his lectures, I am not quite so sure about it. It is true, his manner is singularly collected before an audience. He seems more master of himself in that situation, considering the prejudice which he has to oppose, than I could have supposed possible : nothing less than a deep conviction of the truth and importance of the task he has undertaken, must create this character in any one. But, on the other hand, when I perceive that he depends on truth alone to enable him to overthrow all the errors of ages ; that, without the slightest fear, he puts himself in direct opposition to the whole collected mass of the priesthood and of the ignorant in all countries, who have been for so many thousand years trained by the former to have the greater dread and horror to examine truth ; why, when I consider all these things, and add thereto the enormous sums which he has expended, in preparing the world to receive his doctrines, and the situations in which he voluntarily and with cheerfulness places himself, I do, I confess, somewhat doubt, whether he can be quite sane to give himself all this trouble to effect his object. To him, it is evident, it appears superior to all other considerations, and the clergy, if the communication really came from them, are wrong in supposing Mr. Owen to be opposed to real virtue. He says it is nowhere to be found in practice, and that the preaching of the priesthood over the world for several thousand years has not improved the condition of mankind ; but that their very preachings stand in the way of all true charity, and ever will do so as long as they shall be permitted to govern and oppress the human race by cultivating their imaginations, and in infancy destroying the reasoning faculties. Whatever else may be said of Mr. Owen, I am sure from the whole tenor of his life, that he sincerely desires to improve

the condition of his fellow beings without regard to sect or party. He complains, on the contrary, that the clergy preach peace, while all their doctrines necessarily lead to war; that they preach charity, while all their doctrines necessarily lead to the most uncharitable feelings for all who differ from them; that they preach poverty and humility, while they endeavor to grasp at all power, and to live in comfort, and often great luxury, at the expense of the laborer who does not fare nearly as well: in short, that they do preach the names of the virtues, but they know not yet how to produce them in practice. "A FRIEND TO FAIR PLAY."

Although we do not expect that the priesthood will encounter a man who so fearlessly attacks public prejudices as Mr. Owen, the boldness of his challenge will have the effect of exciting a spirit of inquiry, which cannot fail to be beneficial to the cause of truth. That spirit has, in fact, gone abroad, never to be extinguished. We every day hear of its progress in various parts of the Union. A jealousy of their spiritual guides is evidently gaining ground among mankind, who appear determined to throw off the yoke under which they have so long been compelled to groan by an arrogant and unprincipled clergy.

Extract of a letter dated Feb. 1, 1828.

"As you will perceive by the newspapers, Mr. Robert Owen is in this city. He has delivered a course of lectures, explanatory of the 'Social System.' They were not so well attended, by numbers, as they might have been. However, to suffice for this, those who were present were men of the highest standing in society. I wished to attend his whole course, but as I had a severe cold at the commencement, (in this climate, I was obliged to be careful,) I therefore confined myself to the house. I attended his fifth lecture, which was given at the Government House (where the legislature sit.) There were two or three hundred persons present, all of whom seemed to listen with attention to every thing that was said. I did not attend the sixth (the concluding lecture.) On Sunday morning last he gave a public lecture (gratis) at the American Theatre. The day being wet, it was not so well attended as it would have been, had the weather been otherwise. I attended, and think there were about five hundred persons in the house; in this lecture he rubbed them pretty hard as to their religious ideas and observances. In the afternoon, he gave a second (and last) public lecture in the Government House. The weather was fine; the room was crowded to excess; and in a short time it was impossible to get as near as the outer door. In the papers of this morning, he challenges the priesthood to an open investigation of the foundation on which their fabric of holy religion stands.

Soon after Mr. Owen's arrival, I called on him, and was received in a very friendly manner. He tells of the most unexpected success of his system in England, and also in America. He says societies on his plan are so fast increasing, that every day he hears of some new one commenced, or about to do so. I have given him an account of how things have gone on in the north since his departure, as far as it lay in my power. He seemed much pleased with my intelligence; and I have given him the numbers of the *Correspondent* which I had, to take with him on his way to New Harmony. He leaves here in a day or two for Nashville;

thence he goes to Louisville, and so on to all the principal places between this and his settlement, delivering a course of lectures at each."

Society of Free Enquirers.—It gives us pleasure to inform the friends of liberal principles, that an association, under the title of the "Society of Free Enquirers," has been formed in the upper part of this city, having the same objects and views as the *Free Press Association*. The daily increasing numbers, which could not be accommodated in the Hall of the latter, and its great distance from many parts of the city, required that some arrangement should be made, to meet the wishes of those, residing in these parts, who were desirous of attending the public lectures. The establishment of the "Society of Free Enquirers," while it meets the approbation of every well wisher to mental improvement, and is calculated to enlarge the circle of knowledge, cannot fail, in cooperation with the *Free Press Association*, of paralyzing more effectually the efforts of bigotry and fanaticism. Such, indeed, is the prevailing disposition to investigate religious dogmas, and to get rid of priestly domination, that we have no doubt we shall speedily have to record the formation of other associations, in other parts of this extensive city, in aid of the diffusion of rational principles.

The second lecture before the "Society of Free Enquirers," will be delivered on Sunday (tomorrow) afternoon, at three o'clock, in the Military Hall, corner of Sixth avenue and Fourth street, Greenwich.

Progress of Liberal Principles.—It is with unfeigned pleasure that we give the following act of the General Assembly of Rhode Island, relative to freedom of opinion in matters of religion, which is said to have emanated from a late decision of judge Story, in Providence, R. I.; by which a witness, on account of his disbelief in some religious dogma, was declared incompetent to give evidence in a court of justice:

"An act declaratory of the laws of this state, relating to freedom of opinion in matters of religion.

"Be it enacted by the General Assembly, and by authority thereof it is enacted, that by the laws of this state, all men are free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinions in matters of religion, and that the same do not in any wise diminish, enlarge, or affect their civil rights, or capacities; and that no man's opinions in matters of religion, his belief, or disbelief, *can be legally inquired into, or be made a subject of investigation, with a view to his qualifications to hold office, or give testimony, by any man or men acting judicially or legislatively.*"

It is, indeed, high time that this liberal and just example should be followed by all the other states of the Union. It is utter absurdity that a man, honest and virtuous, should be debarred from giving evidence against an impostor who would deprive him of his rights, because he does not believe, or *profess* to believe, what he cannot comprehend; while the most debauched wretch who believes in a future state of felicity, fire, and brimstone, and who would not scruple to abuse this right, is allowed to exercise it without question. In this state, we believe, no one has a right to *question* a witness as to his religious opinions; but if he openly disavows his belief in certain favorite dogmas of certain Christian sects,

the court is bound, according to "common law," (i. e. unjust decisions,) to reject his evidence. This is justice struggling with the fanaticism of our fathers, which ought to have died with them, and the perpetuation of which, in these days of freedom, is a sad drawback on the mental privileges which our political rights entitle us to. Than the above act, nothing can be more liberal, just, and explicit: it is a monument of fame to the body which produced it, and a credit to the people represented by that assembly.

From the New Harmony Gazette of Jan. 30, 1828.

From Miss Frances Wright we have received a communication, regarding the establishment commenced by that lady in 1825, at Nashoba. Her remarks on human nature, and the exposition she affords of the view which led her to found the colony of Nashoba, and of the principles which regulate the conduct of the members of that society, cannot fail highly to interest every friend to mental liberty, to social improvement, and to every measure which may conduce to elevate our species and to remove the ignorance and misery which has so long oppressed and deluded our unhappy race. Few would *dare* to express their opinions openly and fearlessly as she has done, when these opinions are completely at variance with many of the most deep rooted prejudices which exist among us; yet all who have examined the subject, with minds unwarped by prejudice, must confess the force and correctness of her arguments,—and unanswerable proof of the lack of moral courage, of which our authoress justly complains, even amongst the boldest and freest of men.

The practice which will proceed from these her principles, when adopted as the basis of action, can nowhere be commenced under so auspicious auspices as within the pale of a community. Those of our species who at any time have entertained opinions in morals or religion, opposed to their surrounding fellow men, if they have even ventured to promulgate openly their ideas, have been prohibited from adopting them in practice,—in olden times under pain of death,—in our day, under pain of poverty and ruin, or of the forfeiture of all intercourse with their fellows; or if some philosopher, peculiarly daring, has been hardy enough, regardless of the consequences, to rebel against the commands of custom and to obey only the voice of reason, his isolated position in society, so ungenial to the feelings of a social being, has deterred all from profiting by his example, save a few master spirits equally daring and callous with himself. When however a number of our race endowed with congenial minds, and united in sentiment, congregate together for all the purposes of life, they may bid defiance, as it were, to the world; and, as they possess among themselves the means of supplying their physical wants, of cultivating their mental powers, and of gratifying the social feelings inherent in humanity, they may follow in security the dictates of reason, and, unless politically restrained, they may defy alike the finger of scorn and the shafts of derision, though raised by ignorance and pointed by superstition. Of this truth our authoress is fully aware, and therefore invites congenial minds, from every quarter of the globe, to unite with her, having experience as their conductor, and reason as their guide, in the search for truth and the pursuit of happiness.

NASHOBA.

Explanatory Notes, respecting the Nature and Objects of the Institution of Nashoba, and of the Principles upon which it is founded. Addressed to the Friends of Human Improvement, in all Countries and of all Nations. By Frances Wright.

This institution was founded in the autumn of 1825, in the western district of the state of Tennessee, North America, by Frances Wright.

The object of the founder was to attempt the practice of certain principles, which in theory had been frequently advocated. She had observed that the step between theory and practice is usually great; that while many could reason, few were prepared to proceed to action, and that yet mankind must reasonably hesitate to receive as truths, theories, however ingenious, if unsupported by experiment. In the individual who should first attempt an experiment opposed to all existing opinions and practice, she believed two requisites to be indispensable; mental courage, and, as some writers have defined it, a passion for the improvement of the human race. She felt within herself these necessary qualifications; and, strongly convinced of the truth of the principles which, after mature consideration, her heart and head had embraced, she determined to apply all her energies, and to devote her slender fortune, to the building up of an institution which should have those principles for its base, and whose destinies, she fondly hoped, might tend to convince mankind of their moral beauty and practical utility. Actuated, from her earliest youth, by a passionate interest in the welfare of man, she had peculiarly addressed herself to the study of his past and present condition. All her observations tended to corroborate the opinion which her own feelings might possibly, in the first instance, have predisposed her to adopt,—*that men are virtuous in proportion as they are happy, and happy in proportion as they are free.* She saw this truth exemplified in the history of modern as of ancient times. Every where knowledge, mental refinement, and the gentler, as the more ennobling, feelings of humanity, have kept pace, influx or reflux, with the growth or depression of the spirit of freedom.

But while human liberty has engaged the attention of the enlightened, and enlisted the feelings of the generous of all civilized nations, may we not inquire if this liberty has been rightly understood? Has it not been with limitations and exceptions, tending to foster jealousies, or to inspire injurious ambition? Has it, in short, been pure and entire in principle, universal in the objects it embraces, and equal for all races and classes of men? Liberty without equality, what is it but a chimera? and equality, what is it also but a chimera unless it extend to all the enjoyments, exertions, and advantages, intellectual, and physical, of which our nature is capable?

One nation, and, as yet, one nation only, has declared all men "born free and equal," and conquered the political freedom and equality of its citizens—with the lamentable exception, indeed, of its citizens of color. But is there not a liberty yet more precious than what is termed *national*, and an equality more precious than what is termed *political*? Before we are citizens, are we not human beings, and ere we can exercise equal rights, must we not possess equal advantages, equal means of improvement and of enjoyment.

Political liberty may be said to exist in the United States of America, and (without adverting to the yet unsettled, though we may fondly trust secured republics of America's southern continent) *only there*. Moral liberty exists *nowhere*.

By political liberty we may understand the liberty of speech and of action without incurring the violence of authority or the penalties of law. By moral liberty may we not understand the *free exercise of the liberty of speech and of action*, without incurring the intolerance of popular prejudice and ignorant public opinion? To secure the latter where the former liberty exists, what is necessary "but to will it." Far truer is the assertion as here applied to moral liberty than as heretofore applied to political liberty. To free ourselves of thrones, aristocracies, and hierarchies, of fleets and armies, and all the arrayed panoply of organized despotism, it is *not* sufficient to will it. We must fight for it, and fight for it too with all the odds of wealth, and power, and position against us. But when the field is won, to use it is surely ours; and if the possession of the right of free action inspire not the courage to exercise the right, liberty has done but little for us. It is much to have the fetters broken from our limbs, but yet better is it to have them broken from the mind. It is much to have *declared* men free and equal, but it shall be more when they are rendered so; when means shall be sought and found, and employed to develop all the intellectual and physical powers of all human beings, without regard to sex or condition, class, race, nation, or color; and when men shall learn to view each other as members of one great family, with equal claims to enjoyment and equal capacities for labor and instruction, admitting always the sole differences arising out of the varieties exhibited in individual organization.

It were superfluous to elucidate, by argument, the baleful effects arising out of the division of labor as now existing, and which condemns the large half of mankind to an existence purely physical, and the remaining portion to pernicious idleness, and occasionally to exertions painfully, because solely, intellectual. He who lives in the single exercise of his mental faculties, however usefully or curiously directed, is equally an imperfect animal with the man who knows only the exercise of his muscles.

Let us consider the actual condition of our species. Where shall we find even a single individual, male or female, whose mental and physical powers have been fairly cultivated and developed? How then is it with the great family of human kind? We have addressed our ingenuity to improve the nature and beautify the forms of all the tribe of animals domesticated by our care, but man has still neglected man; ourselves, our own species, our own nature are deemed unworthy, even unbecoming, objects of experiment. Why should we refuse to the human animal care at least equal to that bestowed on the horse or the dog? His forms are surely not less susceptible of beauty; and his faculties, more numerous and exalted, may challenge, at the least, equal development.

The spirit of curiosity and inquiry, which distinguishes the human animal, and which not all the artificial habits and whimsical prejudices of mis-called civilization have sufficed to quench, seems as yet, for the most part, to have been idly directed. Arts and sciences are multiplied, wants imagined, and luxuries supplied; but the first of all sciences is yet left in the

germ: the first great science of human beings, the science of human life, remains untouched, unknown, unstudied; and he who should speak of it might perhaps excite only astonishment. All the wants and comforts of man are now abstracted, as it were, from himself. We hear of the wealth of nations, of the powers of production, of the demand and supply of markets, and we forget that these words mean no more, if they mean any thing, than the happiness, labor, and necessities of men. Is it not the unnatural division of mankind into classes,—operative, consuming, professional, enlightened, ignorant, &c. which inspires this false mode of reasoning, and leads the legislator and economist to see in the most useful of their fellow creatures only so much machinery for the creation of certain articles of commerce, and to pronounce a nation rich, not in proportion to the number of individuals who enjoy, but to the mass of ideal wealth thrown into commercial circulation. Surely it is time to inquire if our very sciences are not frequently as unmeaning as our teachers are mistaken and our books erroneous. Surely it is time to examine into the meaning of words and the nature of things, and to arrive at simple facts, not received upon the dictum of learned authorities, but upon attentive and personal observation of what is passing around us. And surely it is more especially time to inquire why occupations the most useful and absolutely necessary to our existence and well being, should be held in disrepute, and those the least useful, nay, frequently the most decidedly mischievous, should be held in honor. The husbandman who supports us by the fruits of his labor, the artizan to whom we owe all the comforts and conveniences of life, are banished from what is termed intellectual society, nay, worse, but too often condemned to the most severe physical privations and the grossest mental ignorance; while the soldier, who lives by our crimes, the lawyer by our quarrels and our rapacity, and the priest by our credulity or our hypocrisy, are honored with public consideration and applause.

Were human life studied as a science, and, as it truly is, the first and most important of all sciences, to which every other should be viewed only as the handmaiden, it would soon appear that we are only happy in a due and well proportioned exercise of all our powers, physical, intellectual, and moral; that bodily labor becomes a pleasure when varied with mental occupation, and cheered by free and happy affection, and that no occupation can, in itself, be degrading, which has the comfort and well being of man for its object.

It will appear evident upon attentive consideration that equality of intellectual and physical advantages is the only sure foundation of liberty, and that such equality may best, and perhaps only, be obtained by a union of interests and cooperation in labor. The existing principle of selfish interest and competition has been carried to its extreme point; and, in its progress, has isolated the heart of man, blunted the edge of his finest sensibilities, and annihilated all his most generous impulses and sympathies. Need we hesitate to denounce the principle as vicious, which places the interests of each individual in continual opposition to those of his fellows; which makes of one man's loss, another's gain, and inspires a spirit of accumulation, that crushes every noble sentiment, fosters every degrading one, makes of this globe a scene of strife, and the whole human race, idolaters of gold? And must we be told that this is in the nature of

things? It certainly is in the nature of our antisocial institutions, and need we seek any stronger argument to urge against them?

Man has been adjudged a social animal. And so he truly is; equally, we might even hazard the assertion, *more* capable of being moved to generous feeling and generous action, through his affections and his interests rightly understood, than he is now moved to violence, rapine, and fraud by hard necessity and his interests falsely interpreted. Let us not libel human nature! It is what circumstance has made it. But, as profiting by experience, we shall change the education of youth, remould our institutions, correct our very ideas of true and false, of right and wrong, of vice and virtue, we may see human nature assume a new form and present an appearance rich in peace and enjoyment—yet more rich in future hope.

How great soever the differences stamped on each individual by original organization, it will readily be conceded, that by fostering the good, and repressing the evil tendencies, by developing every useful faculty and amiable feeling, and cultivating the peculiar talent or talents of every child, as discovered in the course of education, all human beings, (with the single and rare exceptions presented by malconformation of the physical organs,) might be rendered useful and happy. And admitting only a similar capability of improvement in our own species that we see in other races of animals, we may with justice set no limits to our expectations respecting it, so soon as it shall become, through successive generations, the object of judicious care, and enlightened and fearless experiment.

But if we should hazard the assertion, that of children we may make what we please, we must accord that it is otherwise with man. The simplest principles become difficult of practice, when habits, formed in error, have been fixed by time, and the simplest truths hard to receive when prejudice has warped the mind.

The founder of Nashoba looks not for the conversion of the existing generation; she looks not even for its sympathy. All that she ventures to anticipate is, the cooperation of a certain number of individuals acknowledging the same views with herself; a similar interest in the improvement of man, and a similar intrepidity, to venture all things for his welfare. To these individuals, now scattered throughout the world, and unknown probably to each other, she ventures to address herself. From their union, their cooperation, their exertions, she ventures to expect a successful experiment in favor of human liberty and human happiness. Let them unite their efforts (their numbers will not be too many) and in a country where human speech and human actions are free, let them plant their standard in the earth—declare fearlessly their principles, however opposed to the received opinions of mankind, and establish their practice accordingly, with consistence and perseverance.

This has been attempted at Nashoba: not in a spirit of hostility to the practice of the world, but with a strong moral conviction of the superior truth and beauty of that consecrated by the legal act of the founder. By a reference to that act it will be seen that the principles on which the institution is based are those of human liberty and equality without exceptions or limitations,—and its *more especial object, the protection and regeneration of the race of color, universally oppressed and despised in a country self denominated free.* This more immediate object was selected and

specified by the founder, first, because her feelings had been peculiarly enlisted in behalf of the negro; and secondly, because the aristocracy of color is the peculiar vice of the country which she had chosen as the seat of her experiment.

To be continued.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Antichrist!!!—ANTICHRIST IS COME! With the powers of a god to rid the earth of her corruptions, and to aid the growth of human intelligence and human happiness, he comes! To sweep away the foul idolatries of mankind, he comes! To raise the human character to its high destiny, he comes! To prepare the way for a cessation of all wars and bloodshed, all human misery and wretchedness, all famines and wants, he comes! To lead mankind into the paths of virtue, he comes! To root out vice, and evil, and degradation, he comes! To the abolition of Christianity, that curse of many nations, and of all other religions, he comes!

ANTICHRIST IS COME! Rejoice, all ye, the inhabitants of the earth, and be joyful: the day of your salvation from evil is at hand! The trumpet of morality and gladness shall be heard, and all nations shall rejoice in equality and fraternization! Begone, ye kings and priests, begone! Your exposure is complete; your worth is estimated—fly, begone and hide yourselves!

ANTICHRIST IS COME! He will yield protection to all that is virtuous and good: he will destroy all that is vicious and evil! The industrious man shall be no longer robbed of the profit of his industry, nor shall poverty exist where idleness is not found! Rejoice, ye that are now poor and industrious, your complaints have been heard, and shall be respected! Your days of woe and nights of lamentation shall not return! Ye shall neither fast from necessity nor superstitious customs! Industry shall give you health, and plenty shall yield you strength. Intoxication both of mind and of body must be removed from amongst you, or those who still degrade themselves shall become the dunghills of society.

ANTICHRIST IS COME! He will teach you truth! He will expose and explain all existing error! He will root out oppression and tyranny! He will overthrow the temples of idolatry, and raise up temples to reason and to science! His left hand holdeth instruction, and his right hand shall be the index to all human improvement!

ANTICHRIST IS COME! He will emancipate science and purge history of its errors! His coming has long been revealed to mankind, but its purport has not yet been understood; the power of prophecy not having been given to any man! His coming is a physical result of a physical cause; it was decreed to the first of the human species, and no power that is superior to him existed to impede his journeying!

ANTICHRIST IS COME! To rid the earth of all religious quarrels, he comes! To heal the wounds which the hag Religion has inflicted, he comes! To drive her from her corrupting influence over the minds of mankind, he comes! To stay all persecution in defence of error, he comes! To succor and defend the oppressed, to put down the oppressor, and to give

that vigor to the human mind which shall produce an equality of power, he comes! The Printing Press has been his forerunner, and to give it the fullest power to which it is equal, he comes! Finally, to change the condition of the whole of mankind, he comes!

Priestcraft and Kingcraft are partners in the same firm. They trade together. Kings and conquerors makes laws, parcel out lands, and erect churches and palaces for the priests and dignitaries of religion. In return, priests anoint kings with holy oil, hedge them around with inviolability, spread over them the mysterious sanctity of religion, and, with very little ceremony, make over the whole species as slaves to those gods upon earth by virtue of divine right!

Free Press Association.—The regular monthly meeting, for transacting business, of the Free Press Association, will be held, in the Temple of Arts, William street, on Sunday (tomorrow) the 1st March, at half past 10 o'clock forenoon, when punctual attendance of the members is requested.

In the afternoon, the *theological* lectures will be continued, at half past 2 o'clock; and on the Sunday following the *scientific* lectures will be resumed, at 11 o'clock forenoon.

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